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List of issues and questions in relation to the combined seventh and eighth periodic reports of Liberia

Addendum

Replies of Liberia**

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Impact of the Ebola virus disease on women

1. In 2015 the World Health Organization (WHO) described the outbreak of the Ebola virus disease (EVD) in West Africa as the biggest ever recorded in the history of the world. In Liberia the EVD affected the socioeconomic assets, health and education to name a few. The Ministry of Health reported a total of 10,172 cumulative Ebola cases with 4,466 deaths as of April 2015 in Liberia. Women were disproportionately affected by the EVD due to their role as caregivers. About 75 per cent of cross-border women traders and 200,000 to 300,000 women in small scale artisanal mining, as well as 4,000 women involved in Village Saving Loan Schemes lost their livelihood or means of income generation. A World Bank survey conducted in February 2015 reveals that about 41 per cent of household heads who were employed at the inception of the EVD were unemployed at the time of the survey. The World Bank survey also shows that about 43 per cent women who were self-employed, engaged in petty trade and 19.3 per cent women engaged in food processing business lost their businesses. In July 2015, the Government of Liberia conducted an assessment in collaboration with UN-Women, OXFAM and other partners on the impact of the EVD on women and men in five (5) Ebola hot spot counties. The assessment was aimed at establishing comparable impacts of the EVD on women, men, boys and girls in Liberia. The assessment also explored women's leadership and participation during the national response, as well as coping mechanisms and perceptions of communities regarding the promotion of early recovery. Four (4) thematic areas were covered during the assessment. They were: livelihood/agriculture, access to health services, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) and gender-based violence (GBV). Result of the assessment shows that 47 per cent of the EVD cases were reported among women compared to 53 per cent among men.

2. The National Post Ebola Recovery Plan seeks to mitigate the impact of the EVD on the population. The primary goal of the Plan is to revamp the economy and bring it back to the country's medium and long-term development plans. Government is committed to ensure women's economic empowerment through access to finance, loan payments, savings, cross-border trading, employment, access to roads and markets, food security and nutrition, as well as women's income generation schemes. The protection of women and girls from all forms of violence including sexual and gender-based violence also form part of the Government's post-Ebola recovery strategies. Currently Government, through the Ministries of Health and Gender, is providing medical and social assistance for all EVD survivors including women and children.

Constitutional and institutional framework and access to justice

3. The Constitution is the organic and supreme Law that sets the foundation for the organization of all governance structures and principles in any nation. The Constitution provides guidelines for the protection of the fundamental rights of all persons regardless of their status. As regards the Constitution Review, the crucial role women played in the peace process during the civil conflict and continue to play in sustaining peace and security in Liberia has not gone unnoticed. It has laid the foundation for gender equality that is enshrined constitutionally. Being cognizant of this fact, participants at the National Constitution Review Conference

held in March 2015 unanimously adopted the explicit definition of discrimination as per the Convention. The women through a consultative and participatory process came together from all walks of life across the country, including the Women Legislative Caucus, the Women NGO Secretariat of Liberia, Liberia Women Media Action Committee, Mano River Women Peace Network, representatives of women groups from each of the fifteen (15) counties, as well as the leadership of the Rural Women Structure to participate and make inputs into the process.

Women and peace and security

4. The implementation of the National Action Plan (NAP) for Security Council resolution 1325 (2009-2013) has significantly contributed to women participation in the national security sector and decision-making processes at the national and local levels in Liberia. A gender-sensitive security training manual was developed and is currently being used to recruit and train security personnel of the various security agencies including the national army. As the result of this teaching guidebook, the Liberia National Police and Armed Forces of Liberia have achieved 16 per cent and 2 per cent respectively of the 20 per cent quota set forth in the NAP of female recruitment. The Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization have achieved the 23 per cent more than the 20 per cent quota. Women constitute about 25 per cent of the 61 deputy ministers, while many women are serving as assistant ministers; directors general and deputy directors of public corporations, as well as directors of various sections in all public institutions. Women are heads of civil society organizations (CSO) and involved in advocacy programmes across the country. The draft National Decentralization Bill proposes "Two County-wide reserved seats for women in the Local Government Council" and allows women to contest any or all of the two seats allocated to each administrative district on the Council and (b) bar a woman Paramount Chief from serving as a representative of Paramount Chiefs on the Council.

5. In spite of this achievement, women full participation in decision-making remains very low in rural communities. This is due to the entrenched cultural and traditional practices in rural Liberia that subordinate women to men. The Ministry of Gender, in collaboration with the Ministry of Internal Affairs and partners including women CSOs, continues to create awareness and sensitize rural community members including traditional leaders on the value of gender equality and women's equal participation in decision-making processes in local communities.

6. An evaluation of the 1325 National Action Plan was conducted in March 2015; gaps in the implementation of the Action Plan were identified and the Ministry of Gender and partners are reviewing recommendations that came from the evaluation process. The decision to adopt a new National Action Plan will be made after the recommendations have carefully been reviewed.

National machinery for the advancement of women

Evaluation of the National Gender Policy and Coordination Mechanism

7. The National Gender Policy (NGP) which was adopted in 2009 has a ten (10) year lifespan subject to a five (5) year midterm review. The Policy was scheduled for midterm review in 2014 but it was postponed due to the outbreak of the deadly EVD. The Ministry of Gender has commenced the National Consultative meetings and is in discussions with partners for the full evaluation of the Policy. The evaluation of the Policy is aimed at identifying implementation gaps and to identify strategies to address those gaps. A decision to adopt a new policy or amend the existing document will be made after the Policy is reviewed.

8. After the adoption of the National Gender Policy in 2009, the Ministry of Gender, in collaboration with other Ministries and Agencies appointed Gender Focal Points at each Ministry and agency. The purpose of the Gender Focal Point is to ensure gender is mainstreamed in programmes and projects of each Ministry and Agency. The Policy Division at the Ministry of Gender, headed by a Director, coordinates the Gender Focal Points. A monthly Gender Focal Point coordination meeting is held at the Ministry of Gender and is aimed at information-sharing and adopting best practices in achieving gender equality in Liberia. The Gender Focal Points have benefited from several specialized trainings in gender mainstreaming, gender budgeting, gender tracking and gender analysis skills. As part of Government's reform process, the mandate of the Ministry of Gender and Development was expanded in 2014 thereby creating a new Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection whose mandate covers all issues relating to women, children, the disabled and other vulnerable groups in Liberia.

National human rights institutions

9. The National Independent Commission on Human Rights (INCHR) has a Complaint Department which is supervised by one of the Commissioners. The responsibility of this section is to hear complaints filed by individuals who feel their rights have been violated and/or abused either by state or non-state actors for redress. The complaint may either be written or oral. Presently, of the fifteen counties in Liberia, the Commission has recruited and deployed eight human rights monitors in three (3) counties; six of these monitors are deployed in Montserrado County due to its population, while each of the other two is deployed in Gbarpolu and Margibi counties respectively. The Commission plans to recruit and deploy additional human rights monitors in the remaining thirteen counties. Since 2011 the Commission's Complaint Department has investigated several human rights violation cases; including the famous West Point shooting incident during the peak of the Ebola crisis which resulted in the death of a teenage boy identified as Shakie Kamara.

10. Despite the gains, the major challenge of the Commission's Complaint Department is the hiring of a Director who is expected to be seated in the central office, as well as the recruitment and deployment of additional human rights monitors and investigators for the remaining counties.

Temporary special measures

11. The Government of Liberia has in place several special temporary measures to increase gender equality. These include the Free and Compulsory Primary and Junior Secondary Education policy which is increasing girls' enrolment rate at 46.9 per cent at primary and 45.5 per cent at junior high levels, the Accelerated Learning Programme (ALP) which was designed specifically to help high school dropped out young women who did not meet the educational requirement to be recruited into the National Police get their high school certificate for recruitment. In 2013, the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, in collaboration with the United Nations and other international partners launched a "Male Champions" initiative against sexual violence and encouraged men to take the lead in speaking out against and creating awareness on sexual violence and abuse of women and girls. The initiative encouraged men to become part of the solution to the problem of SGBV and protect women.

Stereotypes and harmful practices

12. An impact assessment on the role of women and men in society has not been conducted. However, numerous nationwide awareness campaigns have been conducted by government and civil society organizations on social norms and stereotypical attitudes that lead to gender stereotyping and harmful traditional practices that impede the advancement of women's rights. These awareness campaigns are targeted at traditional leaders, rural dwellers, government officials, as well as the media, youth groups, students and school authorities. The "Send your Girls Child to School", "No Sex for Grades" and "No Sex for Job" are some of the initiatives that have been undertaken by government and civil society to reduce stereotypical tendencies and other harmful practices against women and girls. These awareness campaigns are also aired on national and local radio and television stations across the country through jingles and dramas.

13. To ensure adherence to the provisions of Article VI Sec. 4d of the Children Law which states: "No person or society shall subject a child to... any unnecessary or uncultured practice that may inflict physical, psychosocial, or emotional pain to the child or otherwise violate or endanger her or his bodily integrity, life, health, dignity, education, welfare, or holistic development and Circular No. 12 (2013) issued by the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Children Protection Division of the Ministry of Gender have conducted a nationwide awareness campaign in all ten (10) counties that are practicing FGM to educate parents and community members on the provision of the Law. The Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) regularly holds traditional consultative meetings with traditional leaders to ensure compliance to Government's policy on the abolishment of FGM in the country. The Ministry of Internal Affairs also collaborated with the Women of Liberia Peace Network (WOLPNET) to conduct a two-day consultative forum with 100 headwomen of the "Busch School" in early 2015. The Headwomen signed an MOU at the end of the forum to affirm their commitment to adhere to Government's directive on FGM. Additionally, the free and compulsory education programme instituted by Government through the Ministry of Education is also contributing to the reduction of FGM practice. Many parents in rural communities are taking advantage of this opportunity to send their girl children to school.

Criminalization of FGM, early and forced marriages

14. The issues of FGM have already been discussed in the paragraph above. As regards early and forced marriages, the Rape Law specifically criminalizes the practice. Furthermore, 18 years, which defines the age of the child as per the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), was unanimously adopted during the Constitutional Review Conference held in March 2015 as the legal age for marriage and has formed part of the Constitution Review Committee propositions pending the National Referendum slated for 2017.

15. Another internment that has addressed FGM is the draft Domestic Violence Bill. This act was endorsed by the President and members of the cabinet in June 2015 and is currently before the house of Parliament for enactment. According to this proposed legislation, section 16.21(1), any individual within the family who uses force, cohesion, threats, intimidation or other unlawful means to perform or have FGM performed on another person without consent has committed an offence and will be charged with a second degree felony. If found guilty, will be punished in keeping with the laws of Liberia. The drafters of the bill choose to put FGM in the Domestic Violence bill because all of the offences emanate from within the family setting.

Violence against women

16. As stated above, the draft Domestic Violence Bill was adopted by the Liberian Cabinet in June 2015 and is before the National Legislature pending enactment. The draft Bill defines domestic violence in general as: "any act of violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to a woman, man, or child, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life between parties in an existing or former domestic relationship." The Bill also defines Sexual abuse as "Any conduct that abuses, humiliates, degrades or otherwise violates the sexual integrity of the person; including any act or threatened act of sexual violence comprising any behaviour that constitutes sexual assault, irrespective of the nature of the relationship between the defendant and the victim, such as forcing a person to witness, maintain or participate in unwanted sexual intercourse by means of intimidation, threat, coercion or the use of force that causes the person to commercialize or to use, in any way, his or her sexuality, or that forces a person to marry, to become pregnant, to have an abortion or to engage in prostitution through coercion, blackmail, bribe, manipulation, intimidation or other illegal means, and confining or detaining a person against their will". Although the definition of marital rape is not explicate, marital rape is inherently prohibited by the draft Domestic Violence Bill. The intent of the draft Domestic Violence Bill is to prohibit and prevent all forms of violence including sexual violence that occurs in domestic relationship including marriage.

17. The Act that established Criminal Court "E" also provides that in every city there is established a Court "E" hearing of sexual violence cases. This provision gives right to Circuit courts across the country to hear SGBV cases at county levels. Specialized trainings in SGBV case management, care, prevention, as well as, proper reporting on SGBV cases have been provided for County Attorneys, Magistrates and judges, City Solicitors, prosecutors, law enforcement officers,

health and social workers and community members. Amidst limited resource allocation, logistical support and lack of forensic laboratory, additional staffs have been hired to assist fast track SGBV cases at Criminal Court "E". This has increased the number of indictment of rape cases from 9 in August term of court in 2014 to 121 during the May 2015 term of court. Discussions are ongoing for the establishment of at least one central forensic laboratory and training of national pathologists. The number of Judges in the Criminal Court E has also been increased from one to two. It is the anticipation of the Government that S/GBV prosecution will increase.

18. The National SGBV Action Plan implementation will end by 31 December, 2015 and the Ministry of Gender is considering reviewing the Plan during the next budget year in 2016/2017. As a result of the impact of the Ebola virus disease on the national economy, no measures have been taken to extend the Safe Houses to other counties, although Government is refurbishing the existing ones. The Government, through the Ministries of Health, Gender and in collaboration with partners, is piloting "One-Stop-Centre" on SGBV case management and care in seven (7) of Liberia's fifteen (15) counties. The Ministry of Gender, in collaboration with the Association of Female Lawyers of Liberia (AFELL) and other partners are continuing to create awareness and sensitization among women on their rights and services available, and provisions of the criminal law that focuses on sexual violence. Awareness messages on violence against women and girls are also aired on national and local radio stations, as well as on community radio stations across the country.

Trafficking and exploitation of prostitution

19. Since the enactment of the Anti-Trafficking Act in 2005 the Government has put in place the following mechanisms to ensure enforcement of the Act. The Ministry of Labour is designated to chair the full implementation of the Act: (a) a secretariat chaired by the Ministry of Labour to coordinate the implementation of the Act; (b) a National Anti-Human Trafficking Taskforce with membership comprising of line ministries and agencies; (c) the security sectors, local and international NGOs, as well as the International Organization on Migration (IOM), UNICEF and the Embassy of the United States of America are the mechanisms in place to enforce the Act; (d) a National Action Plan to combat trafficking in Liberia was launched in March 2014. Apart from previous cases investigated, investigation involving fourteen (14) Liberian girls trafficked in Lebanon by a Lebanese businessman is ongoing. With support from IOM, Government repatriated the girls to Liberia, and they are currently kept in a safe home being supported by Government. All those accused have been indicted and the trial is ongoing.

20. Government is yet to establish a trust-fund and specific shelters for victims of trafficking. Notwithstanding, Government has a programme in place whereby children identified as victims of trafficking are taken into a safe home where they have access to basic social services including education, health, food, etc. Some 150 law enforcement officers including immigration and police officers, as well as religious and traditional leaders and representatives of civil society organizations from across the country were trained to detect, prevent, create awareness and response to trafficking at borders points and in rural communities.

Participation in political and public life

21. Although the draft Fairness Bill is still pending before the National Legislature, an amendment made on section 4.5 of the 1986 Election Law in 2014 incorporated the Fairness Bill provisions on women's equal representation and participation with men at all levels of the governance structure of Liberia. Section 4.5.1(b) of the amended election law states: "A political party or coalition in its submission to the commission, of its list of candidates for an election should endeavour to ensure that the governing body and its list of candidates has no less than 30 per cent of its members from each gender, while Section 4.5.1c also states: A list of candidates submitted to the Commission for an election should endeavour to have no less than 30 per cent of the candidates on the list from each gender". Moreover, it was adopted during the March 2014 National Constitutional Review conference that 50 per cent representation in the national Legislature of each sex be enshrined in the Constitutional review Process pending the national referendum in 2017.

22. Several leadership training workshops have been conducted for women across the country and plans are under way to conduct training workshops for potential and suitable women candidates in negotiations, lobbying and campaign strategies design. The Government, through the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, is planning a training needs assessment of all female county superintendents and women in authority at the local level.

Nationality

23. In Liberia, the Aliens and Nationality Law of 1973 allows children born in Liberia to acquire Liberian citizenship at birth. However, children born abroad to Liberian mothers, however, are excluded from acquiring Liberian citizenship. These provisions are inconsistent with Article 28 of the Liberian Constitution of 1986, which establishes that any child who has a parent who was a Liberian citizen at the time of birth acquires citizenship, provided that the person renounces any other nationality upon attaining majority. During the December 2011 ministerial meeting Liberia pledged to amend the relevant provisions of the Aliens and Nationality Law to bring them into line with the Constitution.

24. Although the general rule is, constitutional provisions prevail over any and all statutes, because the nationality laws tend to be more specific and practice-oriented and administrative authorities refer more easily to older provision of these laws, it is important to officially repeal the older version of the law. The Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection is collaborating with the relevant line ministries, agencies and civil society to sensitize and educate Liberian women on their rights to transfer their citizenship to their children under Article 28 of the 1986 Liberian Constitution.

25. All children born in Liberia are registered and issued birth certificates under the Ministry of Health. Parents of children born outside of health centres or clinics are encouraged to report to the nearby clinic for their child or children to be registered at least within the first week of delivery. All children under five years old are registered and issued birth certificates free of charge. From age six (6) upward, a minimum of $6.00 is charged for birth certificate.

Education

26. The Government of Liberia prioritizes high quality education for all of its citizens and foreign residents alike and concrete measures are being put in place to ensure that girls especially in rural communities enrolled into regular education system nationwide. The "Send your Girls Child to School" and "No Sex for Grades" campaigns are part of measures ongoing to encourage girls' enrolment into formal school system. A National Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) Policy has been developed to provide equal quality vocational education for both girls and boys who may not have the opportunity to continue with their regular education.

27. All schools in Liberia were shut down in 2014 as part of measures to prevent and control the further spread of the deadly Ebola virus disease in the country. However, schools were reopened in 2015 and data available at the time of preparing this report only show girls' enrolment rate at the pre-primary level at 49.1 per cent, while at the primary level is at 46.9 per cent. At the junior and senior high levels illustrated girls' enrolment rate is 43.8 per cent. Statistics on girls' enrolment at the tertiary level was not available up to submission of the report; but it shall be provided in a subsequent report.

28. As part of the Education Reform programme, Government has adopted a Sexual Harassment Policy as a legal framework that protects students especially girls from manipulations and abuses in and out of schools. The policy seeks to provide a student-friendly environment that enhances learning and development. The policy also serves as the regulatory framework that guides teachers and school administrators in the way they discharge their duties. The Sexual Harassment Policy is also used for the workplace as well.

29. The Civil Service Standing Orders (2012) describes sexual harassment in the workplace as constituting a kind of sex discrimination that occurs in the workplace or at work-related events, defining it as "unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favours and other conduct of a sexual nature — such as unwelcome verbal, visual or physical advances — that tend to create a hostile, intimidating, or offensive work environment". The Executive Order No. 38 defines sexual harassment as "making sexual remarks, asking repeated questions about a person's intimate relationship, gender insults, repeated requests for dates, and/or exerting pressure or aggressiveness with the intent of causing any person to yield to sexual demands". Also, the Education Reform Act (ERA) of 2011 considers the following as sexual offences: (a) Sexual coercion, intimidation or blackmail; (b) Sexual assault; (c) Sexual abuse; (d) Impregnating student; (e) Rape and gang rape.

Sexual offence/violence

30. In keeping with the Civil Service Standing Order (2012), Sexual Offence/ Violence is a crime and the penalty for the conviction of felony is dismissal. As such, any teacher/school administrator accused of sexual offence (felony) shall be suspended while undergoing investigation, and if found guilty shall be dismissed, license revoked and turned over to the justice system for prosecution in keeping with the Criminal Procedure Law of Liberia. Penalty shall be prescribed by relevant provisions of the Penal Law.

31. The Government through the Ministry of Education and with support from UNFPA had drafted a Comprehensive Sexuality Education Curriculum (CSEC) for use in all schools in the Republic from pre-primary to senior secondary levels. One of the objectives for the CSEC is to reduce the high rate of teenage pregnancy which is at 38 per cent and increase girls' enrolment and retention rate.

Employment

32. Status of the Decent Work Bill: The Decent Work Bill has been passed into an Act in 2015 pending to be printed and widely disseminated in the formal and informal sectors nationwide. The Act contains appropriate complaints procedures, adequate remedies and sanctions, as well as provides protection for women in both the formal and informal sectors.

33. The Government of Liberia recognizes gender equality as a fundamental right and the disadvantaged position of women is recognized. The National Employment Policy (2009) seeks to address four gender equality priority areas including: Enhancement of employability of women and girls through reforming the Vocational Training System to give special attention to marketable skills to women and girls; Improve support to women's work forums and business support by developing Inter-ministerial Rural Women's Empowerment Initiatives to strengthen the institutional capacity of organizations of female producers and entrepreneurs and to provide support services, including skills and business training, credit, and technical assistance, with emphasis given to gender equality in labour market regulation and legislation; Develop a monitoring and reporting system on gender and employment by ensuring that all labour statistics are sex-disaggregated by age, and deepen this information with strategic gender impact assessments. Ensure these impact studies consider how well new policies and plans address the needs of women, including the Decent Work Act and Identify structural inequalities in the labour market including gender segregation in occupations; gender pay gaps; and impediments to the advancement of women into decision-making positions.

Health

34. The Government of Liberia recognizes the high rate of maternal and newborn mortality and is making concerted efforts to address the high maternal and newborn mortality and improve their survival through the Accelerated Action Plan to Reduce Maternal and Newborn Mortality". The plan has five main objectives: 1) Increase the number and quality of skilled attendants for maternal and neonatal health services to staff health facilities with 24 hour care; 2) Increase coverage and access to quality comprehensive and basic emergency obstetric and neonatal care and essential maternal and newborn health care; 3) Increase access to and utilization of family planning services; 4) Expand and strengthen outreach and community-based services to improve coverage of maternal newborn health care; 5) Improve management of maternal and newborn health services at national and county levels.

35. Government is recruiting and deploying an additional 4,000 health workers, including highly trained midwives, across the country especially in rural communities where accommodations will be available. Over the next five (5) years period beginning January 2016, three (3) "Specialized Regional Hospitals" will be

constructed, while three (3) hard to reach counties hospitals will also be upgraded to improve health service delivery in three counties. Due to the Ebola crisis, Government, in collaboration with WHO and other partners, plan, to build a "National Public Health Institute" to prepare public health workers for any eventual emergency.

36. Abortion remains illegal under the laws of Liberia. However, it may be permissible if medically proven that the potential mother's life is in danger. A draft Reproductive Health Bill which is pending for Cabinet's endorsement has provision on the rights of women and adolescents, as well as the rights of women to post abortive care. In the case of rape that may result into pregnancy, abortions may be permitted by only an identified professional health care provider and only if the life of the mother is in danger.

Rural women

37. The National Rural Women Programme was designed to ensure that rural women were included in participating in decision making processes in rural communities. The programme is coordinated through the Ministry of Gender's Women Empowerment Division and is now established at the district level throughout the country. In July 2015 the Ministry of Gender dedicated the National Headquarters for the National Rural Women Structure in Monrovia. Owing to the low literacy rate among Liberia women, majority of rural women are semi-literate but well sound in decision making if given the opportunity. An Annual National Rural Women Conference which brings together delegates comprising of the leadership and representatives of each local Rural Women Structure from the district and county levels is held to review progress made to empower rural women. Presentations are made at the Annual Conference by gender experts on the rights of women generally and in particular on rural women rights to participate in local social and economic development decision making processes. Additionally, a Rural Women Programme Officer under the supervision of the Director of the Women Empowerment Division is responsible to follow up with the county Rural Women Structures and provides regular monthly updates on the local Structures. But an impact assessment has not been conducted, though discussions are ongoing between the Ministry of Gender and partners in that direction.

38. Two (2) projects are currently being implemented under the National Rural Women programme; they include- the Women Economic Empowerment, which includes the Community Based Conflict Management and the Rural Women Economic Empowerment (RWEE) Projects. The Women Economic Empowerment is targeting 4,000 rural women in 23 communities at risk of conflict associated with concession agreements, community land disputes, and extractive industry activities, as well as women whose livelihoods depend on regional trade activities, referred to as women in cross border trade (WICBT) in six (6) of Liberia's fifteen (15) counties. The RWEE project is providing economic empowerment training in small business management skills, literacy and numeracy for 1,250 market women in twenty-five (25) markets in Montserrado County. The project is also providing agriculture and organizational development training programme, including small business management skills, for 1,000 rural women farmers in five (5) counties over five (5) years period. These 1,000 rural women farmers will be grouped into "Rural Women Farmer Cooperatives to ensure sustainability of their farms.

Marriage and family relations

39. Eighteen years was adopted during the March 2015 National Constitution Review Conference as the legal age of marriage. Forced and early marriages are prohibited under the Rape and Children laws, as well as the draft domestic violence bill, of Liberia. Women married under customary law have equal rights like women married under statutory law and they have rights to seek redress in a court of law. Liberian women have equal legal rights with men to acquire their own property including land and there is no discrimination to landownership. The Ministry of Gender has a Women Land Rights Desk that supports gender mainstreaming in land legislations and build the capacity of women to demand for their rights in community natural resource management including land and the environment. The Desk regularly conducts training and awareness-raising campaigns on gender sensitization on women's land ownership and land rights.